

The Return of Hago

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Author: ThatPersonYouMightKnow

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Summary: Simba's life is turned upside down, when his greatest enemy makes a shocking return...

***Chapter 1*: Chapter 1: The Pain and the Torment**

AN: I'm sure this is a story you've all been waiting for. You all remember Hago, don't you? Wasn't he such a charming, friendly, kind character, who was willing to do anything for anyone? He wasn't? *Exactly...*

The Return of Hago

Chapter One: The Pain and the Torment

"No... Please... Don't..."

Nala's eyes flickered open, and she turned her head to the side, looking at Simba, awoken by his pleading cries. She sighed. "Oh, Simba," she said to herself, a sympathetic look on her face. "What's wrong with you?"

She felt so sorry for him these days. Sleep was supposed to let you relax, but with Simba, it was the total opposite. Every night he suffered – more so than he did during the day. Sometimes she wondered if the dangers in his nightmares were worse than the dangers he faced in real life. Maybe they *were*...

What worried Nala was that these nightmares seemed to get progressively worse with each passing night. She could see it. In his sleep, Simba looked so distressed. There was so much he was afraid of – and it wasn't even real. Well, she *assumed* it wasn't real, but underneath all this, Nala could detect something... Like there was some kind of dark secret hiding behind these nightmares he was experiencing. A deep, dark secret.

And maybe it was a secret that was ready to come out. Maybe they were getting worse for a reason. It couldn't get much worse. Nala was sure of that. She was afraid that, one day, Simba wouldn't be able to take any more of this. It could drive him insane. He could lose his mind.

"Simba?" she called, hoping to wake him up from whatever horrible nightmare he was suffering this time. "Simba?" She prodded him, but he didn't wake up.

Simba tossed and turned in his sleep, looking so very afraid. "I'll do anything... just don't hurt her!" he cried, breathing heavily. It all felt so real to him. The nightmares were hurting him. *Torturing* him. "Don't do that! *Don't! Please!*"

"Right, that's it," said Nala, getting to her paws. "I can't take this any more!" she exclaimed, before shaking Simba frantically. "Get up, Simba! Open those cute eyes! Wake up! *Please...*"

It was just too much to bear. Nala couldn't stand to see him like this. The poor guy really was in pain. He wasn't going to be able to relax *at all* if this kept happening – never mind the day! She had to wake him up before he drove himself nuts with all these horrific visions he was having.

Simba's eyes snapped open, and he grabbed hold of Nala, hugging her as tight as he could, desperate to cling on to the nearest person. "Nala... Oh, my gosh, Nala... You're safe..." He sighed, burying his face in her fur. "You're safe..."

"Of course I'm safe," Nala told him, urging herself to smile. She stroked his back softly, seeing the intense distress he was in. "Let me guess – you had another nightmare. I could kind of tell."

Simba nodded, still having trouble believing that his nightmare wasn't real. That was by far the worst one he had ever had. He knew they were bad – but that was just *horrible*. Too horrible for him to even describe. It hurt just thinking about it. He would rather *die* than go through something like that again. It was pure torture.

"I couldn't stand it, Nala," he told her, staring into her eyes. Somehow, the sight of her – safe and well – made him feel comfortable. She managed to make him forget about his troubles. "It was just so awful." He started shaking with fear. "He's coming, Nala... He's coming..."

Nala narrowed her eyes at him. "Who's coming?"

Simba had a lump in his throat. "Hago," he answered. "I mean it this time. I really mean it. He's back. From the dead. He's coming for me, and if he has to hurt you, too, then he will."

"Was that what your nightmare was about?" she asked, patting his back. He was terrified. Terrified of something that he shouldn't really have to worry about. Hago was dead – and had been for quite a considerable amount of time.

However, the memories of what he had done still scared Nala to this day. He was a horrible, evil, conniving lion, who wanted to take over the Pride Lands with the help of his powerful, dark magic. He was an unstoppable force, and not

exactly the type of person you wanted to meet in the middle of a deep, dark cave. Cruel, vicious, and unrelenting, Hago was easily the person who Nala was afraid of the most. *Easily*.

"He tortured you, Nala," Simba replied, tears welling up in his eyes. "I can't even say it..." He winced, trying to block out the memories. "I just can't..." He sobbed, tears dripping from his face and onto Nala's creamy fur. "It scares me, because I think you're going to get hurt."

"Simba..." She finally saw the inner fear – the fear that lay within the darkest recesses of his soul. "You really think he's coming back – *don't* you?" Deep down, a part of her believed him.

But it seemed so very unlikely. People just couldn't come back from the dead. Once you died, you stayed dead. No second chances. That was life. You just had to deal with it. Nala would have loved for her father to still be alive, but he was gone – killed by Hago, no less. He wasn't ever coming back. The same as if Simba's father were killed, or *anyone's* family, for that matter. Death was a natural occurrence, and you couldn't stop it.

Simba seemed so adamant. "He's coming back," Simba insisted. "He'll find a way. He's going to try and kill us – whatever it takes. It'll be soon." His eyes darted left and right. "Very soon. Think about it – the nightmares keep getting worse. Well, how much worse can they get, Nala? Huh? How much worse can they get? Because that nightmare was worse than any of the dangers I've faced while *awake*."

"I'm sorry..." said Nala, looking down at the ground, not really sure what to say. "But... I just... I can't understand how Hago can come back from the dead. If someone's dead, then that's how they stay. Right?"

"Magic, Nala," replied Simba, still insistent that his arch enemy was coming back for him. "He had magical powers, I don't know... Maybe he knows a way to bring himself back to life. Would it really surprise you?"

"Yes," Nala replied honestly. "Because no one we've ever met has come back from the dead before."

"Not yet," Simba retorted, his eyes wide with fear. Fear that attacked his body. His heart was pounding. Hago was coming. If not today, then *definitely* tomorrow. That nightmare made him want to stay awake for ever. He didn't care – not even if it killed him. "But it'll happen. You can count on it. And I'll be ready. He's not going to hurt you. Not today. Not ever. Even if I have to sacrifice *myself*, nothing will happen to you."

"Don't say things like that, Simba," said Nala, still stroking his fur. "We'll be okay. We always are. We're a lucky pair of cubs."

Simba frowned, staring down at the ground. "Our luck's gotta run out sometime," he mumbled.

Chapter 2: Chapter 2: Ready For the Return

Chapter Two: Ready For the Return

"Problems, Simba?" said Haiba, as he watched Simba and Nala walk past him outside the den that morning. "You woke me up with all those distressing pleas you were making in your sleep."

"You could say that," Simba mumbled, a sad frown on his face. "*Serious* problems. Serious problems that aren't ever going to go away unless I do something about them."

Haiba raised his eyebrows. "Oh, dear," he said, before turning towards Nala. "All right, what's wrong with the Prince this morning?" he asked her. "Didn't he get his beauty sleep or something?"

"It's a bit more serious than that," Nala replied. "Did I mention to you about the neverending, horrific nightmares Simba has everytime he goes to sleep?"

Haiba's eyes widened slightly, suddenly feeling a little disturbed – and freaked out. "Um... No. No, you didn't mention that to me. And where has all of this come from all of a sudden?"

"It's lasted for ages," Simba told him. "Before we even met you. In fact, it all started just after me and Nala got together. That very night. And it just..." He sighed. "It just doesn't stop."

"Until today," Nala added. "Or so he thinks, anyway."

"Why?" Haiba asked, concerned. This sounded really serious. Why hadn't they ever mentioned it to him before? After all, he was their friend, wasn't he? They should have told him before now!

"Because Hago's coming back," Simba told Haiba. "He was our worst enemy. He almost ended up killing us. He even took over the kingdom once! We just barely managed to take it back from him. He's the most horrible person I've ever met. And he's come back to life. Just to kill me."

"Hago?" said Haiba, narrowing his eyes in thought. "You said that name the other day – after that Royal Challenge incident. Where have I heard that before?" Thinking for a moment, he finally came up with an answer. "That's it!" he exclaimed, pointing at Simba and Nala with a claw.

"That's what?" Simba and Nala both asked at the same time.

"Hago!" Haiba replied. "My mother used to know him!" he cried, a grin on his face.

Simba narrowed his eyes at Haiba. "You're looking awfully happy about your mother knowing our worst enemy," he told him.

"She always used to talk about him," Haiba said. "About how horrible and evil and mean he was, you know? She used to think of him as a... Well, I hate to say this, but she thought of him as a *friend*."

"*Friend*?" Simba and Nala both exclaimed. "How could your mother think of him as a *friend*?"

"Look, it's not what you think," said Haiba, waving his forepaws in the air. "It wasn't like he was her *best* friend, or anything. They used to go to the Grand Lands Academy together."

Simba raised an eyebrow. "The Grand Lands Academy?" he said, his eyes widening. "Who would even invent something like that?"

"Yeah – she always said it was pretty weird there. Some kind of freaky, annoying little monkey used to teach them all. My mother could never understand half of what he was saying," Haiba told him.

"I know the feeling," said Nala, nodding. "I hate monkeys. They nearly tickled Zazu to death!"

"But he deserved it," Simba interjected. "I never would have had to fight that stupid cub if he hadn't gotten rid of that Royal Challenge thing." He frowned. "It definitely would have made the day a lot less stressful."

"As I was saying," Haiba continued, "apparently, Hago used to always want to control the class there. Always trying to get people to think they way he did, you know? My mother didn't like him very much, but he had this way of controlling people. They always seemed to listen to him."

"Hypnosis, I bet," Simba muttered. "And we know all about *that*. But how long did your mother know him for?"

"Well, he used to pop up in the classes from time to time, but after she graduated, she never saw him again," replied Haiba. "He just kind of... disappeared."

"So he's been all around the place, then," Nala concluded. "I can't wonder why, though."

Haiba shrugged. "I don't know. Maybe I should have asked her more about him. There's not much I can do about it now, though. You should have told me sooner."

"What, before Simba started getting extremely paranoid?" Nala retorted. "How was I supposed to know this was going to happen?"

"I'm not paranoid, okay?" said Simba, staring at Nala. "I know these kind of things. Trust me. Sometimes the weirdest things can happen around here. If I've learnt anything, then it's *that*."

"So you think that this Hago guy – who I know hardly anything about – is going to come back from the dead, and try and kill you?" asked Haiba, finding that quite difficult to believe. "I've heard of ridiculous, but that is a *seriously* farfetched assumption."

"It'll happen," Simba insisted. "It could happen tomorrow, or even today. I'm scared to death, Haiba."

Haiba just stared at Simba for a few moments. "You killed him – *didn't* you? He was going to do something so terrible that you had no other choice."

Simba stared into Haiba's eyes, and nodded. "Yeah. Well... he sort of killed himself, but... I think I kind of delivered the final blow, if you know what I mean." He frowned. "I know he wants revenge, and he'll do anything to get it."

"Well, what are we going to do about it – if he *does* come back, I mean?" Haiba asked. "Arm ourselves with sharp sticks or something?"

Simba shook his head in response. "I've got no idea. All I know is that we have to be ready. Anything can happen today. *Anything*."

Haiba smiled, and nodded. "And I was having such a nice day. Now I've got to fight an immortal lion. Great."

"*Immortal*?" Simba's eyes widened. "You never said anything about him being immortal!"

"Oh, great, now you've made it worse," said Nala. "Thanks a lot, Haiba. You really are a great pal."

Haiba grinned. "Really?"

"No!" Nala replied. "Now we're just going to end up spending the whole day feeling more frightened than a wildebeest being chased by a hungry lioness!"

"How very right you are, my dear."

AN: Cliffhanger! That was *particularly* cruel of me, wasn't it? Now you'll have to wait a whole day to see what happens next! Ha-ha-ha! Oh, dear. I fear I'm almost becoming as evil as Hago. Now if you'll excuse me, I'm off to kidnap an orphaned kitten for my own financial gain...

Chapter 3: Chapter 3: Gotcha!

AN: I left you off on a very teasing cliffhanger, did I not? Aren't I just evil? At least it'll all be resolved now, eh?

Niche Eenhoorn: You don't know who Hago is? I must say I'm offended. Oh, well, you'll know soon enough. I would recommend taking a look at my previous stories first, but it doesn't matter. At least you're reading!

Reldor: Oh, Haiba isn't insane. His mind is just a little... slanted, that's all. It's not like he's going to go crazy and kill everyone in the Pride Lands. That'd just be stupid...

Chapter Three: Gotcha!

Simba, Nala and Haiba all turned around at the sound of the deep, threatening voice, only to find Sarafina, who was giggling to herself. "Gotcha!" she exclaimed, still giggling.

"Mom!" Nala cried, shooting her a disapproving glare. "What the heck did you think you were doing, talking like that? You scared us half to death!"

"Sorry, I couldn't resist," Sarafina replied, her laughs dying down. "I saw you three having a very serious moment, and I just felt like giving you a scare," she explained with a shrug. "Why do you all look so tense?" she asked wonderingly. "Do you three ever take a break from your 'exciting adventures'?"

"Life's too boring without them," said Simba. "And what we're concerned about is actually very important. My worst enemy is about to rise from the grave, and he's going to kill us all!"

Sarafina laughed in response. "Oh, Simba, you say the funniest things sometimes. I can see why Nala finds you so attractive. She's always saying things like, 'I love Simba so much,' and, 'I think he's the cutest cub ever.'"

"Can't argue with that," said Haiba, shooting a look at Simba.

Nala's cheeks turned red. "Mom..." she said, gritting her teeth. "You're embarrassing me..." Why did parents always have to be like that? She wondered if her father would have embarrassed her like her mother did...

"I know," Sarafina agreed with a smile. "I *like* embarrassing cute little couples. Call it a hobby of mine." She then walked away. "But if you want to be left alone so you two can *kiss*, then I'll go."

Nala's whole face had turned red. "Whoa," said Haiba, pointing at her. "Your head looks like it's going to explode." He chuckled. "Cool!"

"Haiba, you're insane," Nala told him as she joined Simba by his side.

"I know this," Haiba agreed, a grin on his face. "You ain't never had a friend like me."

"You know, I actually can't argue against that," said Simba. "We *haven't* ever had a friend like him. Who else do we know who falls in love with trees and sticks and... *rivers*?"

"Exactly," replied Haiba. "But you can blame my mother for all of that. After all – she *did* drop me on my head when I was a baby. But it makes me much cooler, don't you think so?"

"This is no time to talk about how great we all are," Simba interjected. "We have a problem on our paws, and we've got to deal with it – before we all *die*!" he exclaimed, his eyes wide with worry.

"I just *loved* the way you said that, Simba," Haiba told him. "Very overdramatic, I must say. Go on – say something else."

"Very funny," said Simba, frowning. "But I'm serious. *Very* serious. There isn't enough seriousness in the world to contain how serious this is. Now, let's think about this." He slumped to the ground, holding his head up with his forepaws. "How do you fight an evil lion with enough magical powers to destroy the world?"

"Hmm..." Haiba thought for a moment. "Anti-magic."

Simba and Nala shot him a look. "Anti-magic?" they both exclaimed.

Haiba nodded. "Yeah. Anti-magic. You can use it to deprive a lion of all magical powers."

Simba looked at Nala, and then grinned. "Really?" he asked Haiba, sounding very eager. "Where do we get some from?"

"Ah." Haiba's face fell, his smile fading away. "It only exists in fairy tales. My mother used to tell me those all the time. I remember one about a planet filled full of treasure." He chuckled, shaking his head. "That was just silly."

"So we've got no hope at all," Simba concluded, sighing. "He's not even here and we've already been beaten."

"Come on – don't give up so easily, Simba," said Nala, hitting him playfully on the shoulder. "We've beaten Hago loads of times. I remember the first time we met him."

Simba chuckled, remembering that all too well. "Yeah," he said, nodding. "He froze you. *Froze* you!"

Nala giggled in response. "I know! And then he made us get a stupid jewel for him! And that was just the *beginning* of the trouble he caused!"

"He kidnapped you; made you fall in love with another cub; hypnotised my Dad; and teamed up with my Uncle Scar to take over the kingdom!" Simba listed all of the trouble Hago had caused, still laughing. "And *none* of his plans worked!"

Nala laughed along with him. "Yeah!" she agreed. "What a complete idiot!"

"Well, you're kinda missing the obvious," Haiba pointed out to the two. "If Hago has never beaten you, then why are you so worried, Simba? Even if he *was* going to come back, then what's to say that you can't beat him?"

"Oh, I don't know," Simba replied with a shrug. "He's been getting inside my head with all these nightmares. Wouldn't *you* be scared if you had nightmares about everyone you loved getting viciously murdered?"

"Uh... I guess," Haiba replied. "But they're only nightmares, aren't they? They don't *mean* anything."

"You'd be surprised," replied Simba. "They mean a *lot* of things. He showed me what death is – for bad people, I mean. Once they die, they get... nothing," he told Haiba, gulping nervously. "Just darkness. *Endless* darkness. It sounds horrible."

"Especially if you're scared of the dark," Haiba remarked with a smile. "So what do *good* people – like ourselves – get?"

Simba shrugged. "I don't know. Eternal sunshine and happiness?" he guessed. "How would I know?"

"Because you know what *bad* people get," Haiba replied. "Does this Hago guy only like to talk about really depressing things?"

"Well, duh!" Simba exclaimed. "Evil psychos don't exactly talk about how nice the weather is! What's wrong with you?"

"Too many things," Haiba responded. "Maybe I'll just *shock* Hago into death with my disturbing stories. They're enough to put someone to sleep *for ever*!"

"Somehow I think it's going to be a little bit harder than that," said Simba, a thoughtful look on his face. "Hey – maybe we could just *kill* him!" he suggested.

"A little violent, don't you think?" asked Nala, turning to him. "Since when were you into murdering people?"

"I'm not, but it's *Hago*," Simba responded. "If anything, he *deserves* to die. I hate him. He's put me through hell."

"So when would he come back?" Haiba wondered. "*How* would he come back? And what would he do?"

"You've never heard of people coming back from the dead before?" Nala asked him. "*Ever*?"

"Nope," Haiba answered, shaking his head. "No resurrections, no comebacks... *nothing*. If this Hago person can do it, then I'll be very surprised."

"If you think he's going to come back to life today, then don't you think he would have showed himself to us by now?" Nala asked Simba. "Shouldn't we be *dead* already? Our guts should be hanging from a tree!"

"He's waiting for the right moment," Simba said, his eyes darting left and right suspiciously. "The right moment to strike. He's hiding right now, ready to pounce on us and tear out our throats!"

"He's *really* paranoid, isn't he?" said Haiba.

Nala nodded. "Very." She chuckled, shaking her head. "Hago coming back... Like *that'd* ever happen!"

Chapter 4: Chapter 4: Out of the Darkness

Chapter Four: Out of the Darkness

That night, all was silent in the Pride Lands. You couldn't hear anything. Not even the sound of crickets chirping – because they were all dead.

Well, of course there were bound to be casualties. Bringing someone back to life came with a price. Usually, killing someone else. Unfortunately for the crickets, they were the unlucky ones.

But it was okay, because they wouldn't be the first to die. So many more people were going to lose their lives today. This was because the most evil mastermind the world had ever seen was about to be resurrected from the dead.

It all happened so quickly. No one would have noticed it – probably because they were all asleep, safe and sound. Well, they were safe for *now*, at least...

It was a flash of white light, that's all it was. In the middle of an empty field. That was when all sound ceased. That was when the Pride Lands became *deadly* quiet.

And that was when Hago came back to life.

He appeared in the middle of the field, screaming at the top of his voice. Screaming at the darkness he had been imprisoned in for all eternity. Or so he *thought*... "Oh, yes!" he cried. "Oh, yes, yes, yes!" He laughed maniacally, tossing his head back, taking the deepest breaths he possibly could. "I'm alive!" he exclaimed. "*I'm alive!* At long last!"

It felt good to be alive. He couldn't possibly deny that. Life was better than death. He'd learnt that a long time ago. He wasn't ever going back into the darkness again. Not *ever*. It felt horrible. To know that your whole life was over, and that was all you got. Then it was just the dark, and the cold. It never stopped. You had to suffer it for all eternity.

Well, unless you had certain contacts, of course. Helpful contacts that were willing to assist Hago in his plans. Plans that involved returning to the world of living, and exacting his ultimate revenge. A plan that could not fail. A plan that would result in deaths – including the death of his greatest enemy of all: Simba.

Oh, he had caused *far* too much trouble when Hago was still alive. *Far too much*. Every single one of his plans had been foiled – all because of that one insolent, irritating, arrogant little cub.

All he wanted was the Pride Lands. For a very special reason. The kingdom was rightfully his. That had been decided a very long time ago, thanks to a certain friend of his from years before. He deserved this kingdom, and all of its inhabitants. They should have started worshipping him ages ago.

But of course not. Every time Hago had tried to take over the Pride Lands, his plans had completely gone up in smoke. Quite literally, in the case of his death. He had burnt. Burnt in hot, searing fire. There was no trace of him left. Not even his staff – the source of his magical powers.

Unlike the rest of his family, Hago was never born with magical powers, and had been disowned by his parents because of this. So, with the help of his brother, Bora, he was given a staff, which was filled with all different kinds of powers and abilities.

And he used these powers to exact revenge. He murdered his family in cold blood, and made sure that it hurt. They deserved to die, and now they would suffer in darkness for all of eternity. The thought of that always brought a smile to his face. It gave him a sense of... accomplishment. At least his life wasn't worthless...

But now he could finish what he started. He had a lot of things to do, and he was going to make sure that everything went right this time. While alone in the darkness, he had been plotting and scheming, waiting for the day when he would finally be resurrected.

He always knew he would come back to life, thanks to a reliable source from his past... A reliable source who had... been very generous in giving Hago this opportunity. This person was a big fan of pain and suffering, so he and Hago had something in common...

Taking another deep breath of the fresh Pride Lands air, Hago looked left and right, gripping the staff that contained all of his magical powers. Needless to say, his staff was still a necessity. Thanks to a back injury, he was forced to carry it if he wanted to be able to walk.

"Hago?"

Hago turned around, and found his brother, Bora, staring back at him. "Bora?" A smile spread across Hago's face. "How pleasant to see you. How did you find me?"

"I could smell you," Bora replied. "The smell of magic never goes unnoticed. Especially in this case." He looked Hago up and down. "So you really *are* still alive, then?"

Hago nodded, his smile widening. "That I am, Bora. Very much so." He inhaled deeply. "Back into the wonders of life."

"But how?" Bora asked, taking a step towards his younger brother. "You were dead. You *burnt*. I *saw* it. You shouldn't be here."

"Actually, I *should* be here," Hago retorted. "I have a very good friend in the darkness. He... assisted me. Brought me back. I have a very important job to do, and he wanted to make sure that I did it."

"Who is it?" Bora demanded, staring into Hago's eyes. "Who resurrected you?"

"Ah." Hago grinned. "That would be telling, now, wouldn't it? You think I'm really going to tell you – especially after you betrayed me?"

"You're horrible, Hago," Bora told him. "The most horrible person I've ever known. You've hurt people. You've *killed* them. You don't deserve to live."

"I could say the same of you," replied Hago, glancing left and right. "As I'm sure you know, I don't take very kindly to those who betray my trust. In my opinion, *you* are the one who deserves to die."

Bora scoffed. "Not only are you evil, but you're an idiot, too. You're all wrong, Hago. You're a psychopath."

"How very rude," Hago remarked, brushing his comment off as if it were some dirt on his chest. "But your insults mean nothing to me right now. There is so much that has to be done. And so little time to do it all in." He sighed, looking around the field, and then at his brother. "But, Bora, before I go, I have one more thing to say to you."

Bora raised an eyebrow at him. "And what might that be?" he asked.

He leant in close, whispering in Bora's ear. "*Kufa... inawadia...*"

With that, he sliced Bora's throat with the sharp end of his staff, and grinned maniacally as he watched the crimson blood spill from his brother's neck. He collapsed to the ground, gagging and twitching.

Hago chuckled, looking down at his brother's corpse. "There's one problem taken care of," he said, before walking away from Bora's body. "Now I have to find a little friend of mine. Well, *enemy*..."

Hago headed towards Pride Rock, knowing that he would find the one cub necessary for completion of this plan – which he had taken so very long to prepare – there.

Nala.

AN: Oh, my God! Hago! Oh, no! This is a tragedy! He's already killed his own brother! Who knows what he's capable of next? And did I just drop several mysteries and secrets into that previous chapter? You betcha!

Chapter 5: Chapter 5: Hago Makes an Escape

AN: I must warn you – a horrible, *horrible* secret is about to be revealed. It's not for the faint of heart...

kora22: You should remember it. It'll become a major problem soon...

Kblade: I know! I loved Bora, too! But characters have to die. It makes everything much more dramatic and emotional!

Chapter Five: Hago Makes an Escape

"I just don't understand it," Simba said, sighing as he lay down on his back that night. "I thought Hago was going to show up today. I *knew* he was going to. I could feel it." He shot a look at Nala. "You think I'm dumb, don't you?"

"Dumb?" Nala raised an eyebrow at Simba. "Why would I think you're dumb?"

"I'm dumb," Simba insisted, shaking his head. "Dumb, dumb, dumb, dumb, dumb. I've been getting worked up over nothing. *Nothing*! How could I be so stupid? Especially after everything I've been through. I get a whole bunch of creepy nightmares, and *nothing* happens? What kind of a sick monster would do such a thing to me? What did I do to deserve this? Gee, it's not like I go around saving everyone from certain doom all of the time."

"Just cool it, Simba," said Nala. "You never know, maybe Hago *will* show up – not that I would want him to – and come after us. For all I know, you could be absolutely right! *I* could be the idiot!"

"You're not an idiot," Simba told her. "You're *never* an idiot, Nala. It's just that I feel so stressed. If Hago wants to come after me, then why doesn't he just show himself? He might as well get killing me over and done with! Isn't that easier for the stupid idiot?"

Nala couldn't help but laugh. "So you think that he's just being awkward?" he asked. "Just to annoy you even more?"

"It wouldn't surprise me," Simba replied, closing his eyes. "I know *exactly* what'll happen now. I'll close my eyes, and I'll have a nightmare – a nightmare that's even *worse* than the one I had the night before!"

His eyes were wide with worry. "Uh, Simba, I think you're going a little crazy," Nala told him. "Maybe you should just take a few deep breaths or something – before your head explodes."

"I think that'd be *better*!" Simba cried. "Otherwise I'll just die a horrible, painful death and then you'll be upset and Mom and Dad will spend the rest of their lives crying and Haiba will say, 'I think that looks kind of hot,' and then—"

Nala rolled her eyes and gave him a big kiss on the muzzle, taking Simba by total surprise.

Releasing him from the kiss, Simba blinked a few times, stunned. He then smiled from ear-to-ear. "Suddenly, I feel a little sleepy," he said before falling to the ground, snoring quietly. "Sleepy, sleepy, sleepy..."

Nala wiped her forehead with her paw. "Phew!" she exclaimed, smiling. "Mom always said that giving a cub a big kiss would make him fall asleep. Looks like she was right." She chuckled to herself. "Maybe I should do that more often." Nala opened her mouth and let out a yawn, before snuggling up to Simba, shutting her eyes. "And now I can sleep, too..."

Suddenly, Nala was grabbed by someone, and she cried out in surprise! "Who...? Who is it?"

She gasped loudly when she found herself staring into the menacing eyes of Hago – a lion she hoped never to see again. "It's... It's *you*!" she cried, pointing at him. "But... But how... how did you...?"

"How am I still alive?" Hago finished for her. "Well, my dear, it's a very interesting question you've asked. But the answer comes in the form of a very long story – which I don't particularly want to tell you at the moment. But it's not me that's important right now, Nala."

Nala glared back at him. "Oh, yeah?" she retorted, raising an eyebrow at the monster who had murdered her father. "And what *is* important, you murdering freak?"

A cruel smile spread across Hago's face. "Well, Nala, it's *you*. You see, I'm afraid I haven't been very truthful in the time we've known each other, and I have much to explain. But, since this will take a considerable amount of time – and I don't particularly want to be caught – I suggest I do the explaining elsewhere."

"You're not taking me *anywhere*," Nala told him firmly. "I'll *kill* you first – don't think I won't!" She wasn't going to let Hago get to her this time. He'd already caused enough trouble in her life. That was going to stop.

"You won't kill me, Nala," Hago replied. "I can tell. Behind those charming eyes, I can see that you're interested. *Very* interested in what I have to say to you. Isn't that right, Nala? *Isn't it?*"

Nala just stared at him. "So you now have excellent powers of observation," she said. "And what has this got to do with me?"

Hago sighed, looking down at the ground. "Just shut up, you insolent little girl," he snapped. "It's about time you listened to those older than you. You were always such an impatient cub."

"Good!" Nala spat angrily. "And *you* were always such a horrible, cruel, vile, *evil* lion!"

"Talkative, too," Hago remarked, before putting Nala down on the ground. "But I can fix that." He raised his staff and brought it crashing down on top of Nala's head. She stumbled about, a dazed smile on her face, and then collapsed to the ground, unconscious. Hago sighed, smiling. "That's a little better."

In one swift movement, Hago put Nala on his back, turned around and headed out of the den. *Now to find somewhere to live*, he thought. *Obviously I can't live in the Outlands. For a start, it was horrible there. I'll find somewhere nicer to live out my newfound life. Somewhere far more pleasant.*

"Whoa!" Haiba cried, as he suddenly found himself on the edge of Pride Rock, looking down at the ground below. He stumbled backwards, falling over. "What the heck?" he exclaimed, looking around frantically. "Weird..." He put a paw to his head. "Since when did I start sleepwalking?" He shrugged. "I must be adjusting to the climate of the Pride Lands – whatever that means..."

Turning around, Haiba was about to head back towards the den, when he saw Hago, who was carrying Nala on his back. He raised an eyebrow at seeing this. *Odd*, he thought. *Didn't I kidnap Nala in the same way when I needed to get married to her? Maybe people are copying me... That's not fair!*

Watching as Hago disappeared with Nala, Haiba hurried into the den and over to Simba, quickly nudging him awake. "Simba, I think you'd better get up," he said.

Simba's eyes flickered open, and he looked up at Haiba. "Haiba?" He rubbed his eyes with a paw. "Why'd you wake me up? It was the first time in ages I'd slept without having a nightmare."

"Yeah, great – but we kinda have a problem," Haiba told him, pointing towards the outside of the den. "You know – one of those *deadly* problems that involve people dying horribly!"

"What are you talking about?" Simba asked, pulling himself to his paws.

"Nala!" Haiba exclaimed. "Some weird guy with a staff is taking her away from Pride Rock!"

Simba's eyes widened in horror. "Staff?"

Haiba nodded. "Yeah. The top of it looks like a cobra, for some reason. Does that mean something?"

"Hago," Simba whispered, before sprinting out of the den, as fast as his little legs could carry him.

"Hago?" Haiba narrowed his eyes, before running after Simba. "Simba, wait! You mean, as in *Hago*, Hago?"

Simba nodded in response as he ran. "Yeah," he confirmed. "*That* Hago. Not that I've heard of any other Hagos around here, of course. Have you?"

"No," Haiba replied, running alongside Simba now. "But, um... how exactly do we stop him from taking Nala to his horrible torture chamber of evil?"

"What makes you think he has a torture chamber of evil?" Simba asked.

"He's evil," Haiba replied. "*All* villains have a torture chamber of evil. Have you learnt nothing?"

"Oh, no..." Simba gasped, slowly coming to a halt in the middle of the field. "They've gone..."

"What do you mean, 'they've gone'?" Haiba asked, looking around the empty field. "Oh..."

Hago had seemingly disappeared, leaving no traces of him or Nala behind. He had completely vanished out of thin air.

Simba frowned. "It's starting again."

Chapter 6: Chapter 6: The Truth Comes Out

Chapter Six: The Truth Comes Out

Opening her eyes, Nala groaned. "Ow..." she said, putting a paw to the top of her head. She could feel a bump there, which throbbed with pain. She quickly took her paw away. It hurt too much. "Where am I?"

Nala got to her paws, surveying her surroundings. The land was barren, and it looked like no one had lived there in years. Dead branches lay on the ground; the trees – what was left of them – were all dead; and the only plants that remained were a few medium-sized bushes. The whole place looked completely devoid of life.

"Surprised, my dear?"

Nala turned around at the sound of Hago's voice. She growled at him angrily, extending her claws. "*You...*" she said sternly. "You take me back – you take me back *right now!*"

Hago simply chuckled in response. He wasn't affected by the threatening look Nala was giving him. She wouldn't do anything. She was far too intrigued. There were questions left unanswered. She wouldn't *dare* kill him if she wanted to learn some information. Plus, there were other things to be discussed.

"I'm not going to take you back, Nala," Hago told her. "That would just be foolish of me. I haven't come all this way just to take you back again. Have you ever heard of a kidnapper doing such a thing before? Of course you haven't – it's *stupid!*"

"So what do you want?" Nala demanded, taking a step towards him. "Well? *Tell me!*" she ordered. "You want to kill me, is that it?"

Hago laughed. "If I wanted you dead, Nala, then I would have done that when I came into the den last night. I would have smeared your blood all over the walls. But..." He turned around. "I'm not that cruel."

Nala scoffed. "Not that cruel?" she said with a laugh. "You've gotta be kidding me. You're nothing *but* cruel! Or is your ego too big for you to possibly understand that? It wouldn't surprise me – you jerk."

"You rely heavily on insults, don't you, my dear?" Hago retorted, turning back to her. "Now can we get on with more pressing matters? I've had quite enough of your complaining."

"And I've had quite enough of *you!*" Nala shot back. "Why can't you just *die*? Properly. No one wants you around. Haven't you realised that by now?"

Hago ignored her, and gestured to their surroundings. "Look around you, Nala. What do you see?"

Nala rolled her eyes and looked around. "Not much," she answered. "A few dead trees, some bushes." She shrugged. "That's it, really." She narrowed her eyes at him. "And *why* are you asking me this?"

"This is what remains of your pride," Hago revealed, poking one of the dead branches on the ground with his staff. "You are staring at the remnants of what was once known as the Wild Lands." He raised his eyebrows at Nala. "Now you suddenly look interested."

Nala didn't understand – and this just fuelled her speculation as to what Hago wanted with her even more. Why had he brought her here? To where she was born? To her original home? Granted, she hadn't lived here for that long before she made the move to the Pride Lands, but it was still her original home. She knew she was here for a reason... But what was the reason?

"Why have you brought me here?" Nala asked wonderingly, circling around the area. *What happened here?* she wondered to herself. *Where is everyone who used to live here? Did they all die?*

"So many things happened here, Nala," Hago replied, looking left and right around the decaying land. "A war was fought; terrible bargains were struck; your *birth...*" He shot her a sly look.

"What are you talking about?" Nala exclaimed, not understanding anything now. If he didn't want to kill her, then just what *did* Hago want? She was getting tired of this already... "If you don't start explaining within the next five seconds then I'm getting out of here."

"But you won't," Hago retorted, taking a step towards Nala. "I know you too well, Nala."

"No, you don't," Nala shot back, glaring at him. "You know nothing about me. *Nothing.*"

"Oh, but I *do*, Nala," Hago insisted. "I know all too well about you. Tell me..." He joined Nala by her side. "Have you ever questioned your mother about the circumstances of your birth?"

"My birth?" Nala raised an eyebrow at him. "No," she replied with a shrug. "Not really. I've never really thought it."

"And what's your earliest memory?" Hago asked, as if he already knew the answer Nala was going to give him.

"Just... running about," Nala answered. "Here – I think. I can't remember too much before I came to the Pride Lands. I was a bit too young."

"Of course you were," said Hago, nodding, sounding almost sympathetic. "It wouldn't surprise me, really. After all – it is what you would call my fault."

Nala slowly looked up at Hago, her eyes widening. "What... What did you say?"

"It's my fault," Hago repeated, striding away from Nala, closing his eyes. "Tell me another thing, Nala – what about your mother? And her relationship with your father? What do you know about that?"

"They were in love with each other," Nala replied, glaring at Hago. "And we would have been a happy family – if you hadn't killed him."

Hago chuckled in response, turning to Nala, his eyes open. "But I *didn't* kill him, Nala," he revealed, a maniacal grin on his face. "Your father has been right in front of you all along."

Hago walked towards Nala, staring into her eyes. "*I am your father.*"

Nala's eyes were wide with horror, as she slowly backed away. "No..." she said, shaking her head. "No... That's not true... It's not true!"

"It is, Nala," Hago said. "It *is*!"

"You're nothing like him!" Nala argued. "My mother told me all about my Dad. He was completely different!"

"That's just what I *made* her think," Hago told her. "With my magical powers, it's all too easy to alter someone's memory. You see – I don't particularly make a good mate, and your mother was just a little... fling I was having for a while. Really, I saw her nothing more as an object of pleasure. But then, as soon as she said she was pregnant, I changed her memory of me and ran off!"

"You're lying!" Nala cried, tears in her eyes. "You're lying! You're not my father! You're not! *You're not!*"

Hago laughed evilly, loving every second of this. To witness Nala's misery... It just made him so excited! "Yes, Nala! Yes! I am your father! The one you call Dad! Muerto isn't even a real name! It just means 'dead'. Clever, no?"

"*No!*" Nala screamed, sinking to the ground, sobbing and crying, unable to take the truth in. It was just too much... "You're not my father! You're a monster! A monster!"

"I am a monster *and* your father," replied Hago, not caring one bit about his daughter's suffering and the intense sadness she was feeling. "Although, not that I have you here right in front of me, we can start with my plan. We're going to do wonderful things together. Such... *wonderful* things..."

Nala slowly lifted her head to look at Hago, her eyes red with tears. "No way," she said, shaking her head. "We're not doing anything. I want nothing to do with you."

"Too bad." Hago grabbed his daughter by the neck, and started roughly dragging her away. She screamed and cried in protest, but Hago didn't listen. "Don't worry about it, my dear. You'll adjust to the truth soon enough. After I've made a few... *alterations* of my own..."

AN: Oh. My. God. Hago... is... Nala's... *father*. Nala... is... Hago's... *daughter*. Wow. It just blows your mind on so many levels, doesn't it? It's actually kind of freaky. Oh, and by the way – it gets worse. Like, *super* worse. Were you expecting less from the final chapter? Ta-ta for now!

Chapter 7: Chapter 7: The Horror Is Revealed

AN: This is a lovely, happy, cute little chapter. I'm sure you'll all love it. *Just love it...*

kora22: Twists and turns, eh? I do that a lot.

Kblade: It's true, all right. Hago is most certainly Nala's father. Such a wonderful family, isn't it?

Chapter Seven: The Horror Is Revealed

"Simba..." Haiba sounded exhausted. "It's been two days... How long do we have to go on for?"

Simba kept on walking, determined to find Nala. "For as long as it takes," he answered, making his way across the dusty, barren land. The sun beat down on them both, and even though his body was calling for him to rest, he refused to listen. He wasn't going to give in. Not until he rescued Nala from Hago.

"And how long is that going to be?" Haiba asked, collapsing to the ground, finally giving up.

"You can't stop now!" Simba said, turning around and heading over to Haiba, pulling him to his paws. "We've gotta find Nala! She could be hurt – or worse, *dead*!"

"If she's dead, then what's the point of even finding her?" Haiba retorted, trying to catch his breath. The heat was making it so difficult for him to breathe... He couldn't stand much more...

"Oh, you know what I mean!" Simba replied, continuing on his journey. "She has to be around here somewhere..." he said, looking left and right. "Hago can't have gone too far. I think he *wants* us to find him."

"But I'm so tired," Haiba complained, stumbling to Simba's side. "I haven't eaten in two days, and I've barely slept. We can't go on like this for ever. We'll just end up starving to death! The buzzards are gonna pick us clean by the end of the third day!"

"Don't be ridiculous," said Simba. "More like the end of the *second* day."

"But that's today!" Haiba exclaimed, a desperate look in his eyes.

Suddenly, Simba looked concerned – and just a little bit worried. "I know," he admitted, frowning. "That's why we've gotta find Nala – and fast."

"But where would she even be?" Haiba wondered, looking around the empty land. "Look at this place, Simba. It's all... empty and stuff. Wouldn't we have noticed her by now? Maybe we're going in the wrong direction..."

"Trust me," was Simba's reply. "I've got it all worked out. I know what I'm doing." At least, Simba *hoped* he knew what he was doing. Somehow... he knew where Nala was. Like... inside of him, there was this... funny feeling. It felt stupid, but at the moment, it was all Simba had to go on. Hago hadn't left any clues, so this was his only option – to just look. Look for Nala, and hope he would find her. There was nothing else he could do.

Haiba raised an eyebrow at Simba. "*Do* you know what you're doing, Simba? 'Cause right now, it looks like we're in the middle of nowhere. There's no food, no water, and I'm pretty sure that there's no Nala." A sudden thought occurred to him. "Hey – maybe *that* was Hago's plan."

Simba didn't understand. "What?"

"Maybe he wanted us to try and look for Nala," Haiba explained. "So we would come all the way out here, and starve to death. Maybe Nala's already dead."

"Don't say that. She's still alive. It may sound stupid, but... I think that... if Nala ever *did* die... then I'd... know. Like I'd... *feel* it, somehow. You know?" said Simba.

Haiba sighed, and then smiled at Simba. "All right," he said, giving in. "We'll keep looking. It's not like we can do much else, right?" he joked with a chuckle.

"I say we just keep moving forward, until we get to the next pride," Simba told him, beginning to walk again.

"Whoa, wait a second," said Haiba, hurrying over to Simba's side, walking by him. "The next pride is at the Wild Lands."

"Yeah." Simba shrugged at him. "So? What does that have to do with anything?"

"Well, everyone there has been dead for a while, now," Haiba told him. "There's no life there – at all. The whole *place* is dead!"

Simba sighed, looking down at the ground. "Great," he muttered. "And I was hoping we'd have a chance to rest there."

"Huh?" Haiba's eyes widened. "The one place you *do* want to have a rest at, and it's all gone?" He moaned loudly. "Oh, I hate my life!"

"Oh, all right." Simba decided to give in. "When we get to the pride – what's left of it – we'll rest there for a while. Okay?"

Haiba looked relieved. "Thank you," he sighed, glad that he would be able to sit down for a while. This had certainly been a long journey... He hoped it wouldn't last much longer.

"Don't mention it. Now come on. Let's keep moving. We'll get there much quicker." Simba continued walking across the seemingly infinite land. *Come on, Nala*, he thought. *Where are you?*

"You were right..." Simba told Haiba, upon entering the Wild Lands. "It looks even deader than everything else around here."

The Wild Lands consisted of nothing more than dry bushes and dead trees. Simba even thought he could see a lake in the distance – a lake that was totally dried up, devoid of any water. He presumed this was probably once a great kingdom – before everyone had died. "So do you know *why* everyone died?"

"Who, me?" said Haiba, pointing to himself. "No way," he answered, shaking his head. "It was all a complete mystery. No one's been here for ages."

"Hmm..." Simba narrowed his eyes in suspicion. "Let's take a look around," he suggested, walking forward. "You never know what we might find..."

"I've seen that look," Haiba told him. "That 'I'm Simba and I know what's going on' look."

"Hago could be here," replied Simba. "He could have brought Nala with him. They might be hiding somewhere."

"Why here?" Haiba wondered. "It's not exactly the best place in the world you can live, is it?"

"Would you come looking around here?" Simba retorted. "No. You wouldn't. It's the perfect place to hide. Think about it."

"Surely we would have heard something by now," Haiba pointed out. "Someone walking, or... breathing. Anything, really."

"One quick look can't hurt," said Simba. "What have we got to lose?"

"Our sanity?" Haiba answered.

"Tell you what," said Simba, craning his neck to the side, noticing a few caves in the distance. "You take a look in those caves," he instructed, pointing to them. "I'll try that dried up lake over there. Okay?"

"Do I even have a choice?" Haiba responded, before doing what Simba said, heading off towards the caves in the distance. *This is going to be like looking for an ant on an elephant.*

Simba continued towards the dried up lake, and stopped when he came to the edge. The dirt didn't even look wet. It was all dry as a bone. "Weird..." said Simba, scratching the back of his head. "What happened around here?"

Simba walked around the edge of the lake, making his way over to the other side. He found himself at a rocky area, with random hills of stone and rock scattered close together around the land. Cave entrances seemed to be nestled in amongst the hills, and this only managed to confuse Simba. "How am I gonna find Nala in all of this mess?"

He got an answer when he heard movement, coming from on top of one of the rocky hills.

Quickly looking up, he could see Hago, who lay on his back on top of one of the hills. He turned his head to look at Simba, and then grinned. "Hello, there!" Hago greeted him, hopping to his paws. "Welcome to our happy home!"

He walked down the hill, standing in front of Simba. Needless to say, the Prince of the Pride Lands wasn't impressed. "Where is she?" he demanded.

"She?" Hago feigned a look of confusion. "There's no she here," he told him. "Unless you mean my little Nala." He raised a claw. "Of course! That's it!"

"I don't have time for this." Simba pushed past Hago, only to be grabbed by him and thrown to the ground.

"Ah, ah, no peeking," said Hago, shaking his head. "You know, Simba, we've been doing this little run-around of ours for ages," he said, circling Simba. "It's been loads of laughs. But the truth of the matter is: none of us are getting any younger. And I was thinking it was time to start a family."

Hago made his way over to the entrance of a small cave. "I've already had a daughter for quite some time. A daughter you've been looking after – so I borrowed her."

Hago gestured to the entrance of the cave, and inside, Simba could see a cub with creamy fur, her face obscured, tied to a rock by vines. "No..." Simba said, his eyes widening in shock, recognising her instantly as Nala.

Hago slashed through the vines with his staff. "She needed a little moulding of course – what cub doesn't? – but in time, I came to love her as my own." He looked at Nala, and smiled "Say hello, Nala."

Nala sat up, and Simba gasped. She now had blood red eyes, and an insane grin on her face. She giggled maniacally, jumping from the rock and to her paws, looking like she had lost her mind.

Which she had.

She just laughed and laughed, completely insane.

Simba growled loudly, and jumped to his paws, completely losing it. He was going to *kill* Hago for this!

Hago laughed evilly at the top of his voice, and ran off, disappearing into a cave.

Simba sprinted after him, determined to put him to rest for good. Running through the darkness of the cave, he couldn't see Hago anywhere, but he knew he couldn't be that far in front.

He came to a halt in the middle of a wide cavern. Looking around, Simba noticed that Hago was nowhere to be seen.

Simba stared straight ahead, and found Hago's peculiar staff sticking in the ground. It was such an odd thing. Its head was shaped like that of a cobra, and somehow, it granted him amazing powers.

Simba was about to reach out and touch it, when suddenly, Hago's voice rang through the air. "*What's the matter, Simba?*" he asked. "*No witty comeback? No threat?*"

Suddenly, the eyes on the cobra head of the staff glowed a bright white. Simba turned his head, to find that the eyes were projecting a blank screen onto the wall.

"*Then I'll provide the narration.*"

The screen cut to Hago, standing in the middle of the same cave Simba stood in right now. He had a sinister grin on his face, and held in his paw a sharp stick.

"*I'll begin with how I peeled back the layers of the girl's mind,*" Hago began, still speaking from an unknown location.

Suddenly, the screen cut to Nala, who lay on a rock, tied to it by thick vines. She struggled and squirmed, trying desperately to escape, but couldn't get away.

"*Oh, she bravely tried to fight it at first,*" said Hago.

On the screen, Hago made his way over to Nala, still holding the sharp stick. He raised it high above her left eye, and brought it crashing down.

What Simba saw next was far too gruesome to describe.

"*You would have been proud to see her so strong,*" Hago continued. "*But all too soon, the torture and the torment took its toll, and the dear girl began to share such secrets with me. Secrets that are mine alone to know, Simba.*"

Simba could picture Hago grinning.

"*It's true, Simba. I know everything about you. And I must admit, it's sadly anticlimactic. Behind all the heroism and*

courage you're just a little cub in a big world, crying for recognition."

Simba had an angry glare in his eyes.

"It'd be funny if it wasn't so pathetic... Oh, what the heck, I'll laugh anyway." Hago laughed loudly at the top of his voice, as if mocking Simba for everything he was.

With an angry cry, Simba turned around and made a mad leap into the darkness, grabbing hold of Hago – who was hiding there – with all the strength he could muster, slashing him across the face and chest with his claws.

Simba grabbed Hago by the throat, pulling him down to his level. Hago just grinned in response. "If you don't like the movie, I've got slides!"

Growling, Simba threw him at the cave wall, and to his surprise, Hago crashed through it, ending up on top of a rocky hill.

Hago lay on his stomach, staring down at the bottom of the hill. He could see Nala standing there, still grinning.

Still insane.

Hago smiled in response, still entertained by all this.

Simba grabbed Hago by the throat, and pushed him up against what remained of the cave wall, unable to contain the immense rage he was feeling right now. "I'll break you in two," he threatened, shaking with anger.

Hago just chuckled. "Oh, Simba. If you had the guts for that kind of fun, you would have done it ages ago. *I*, on the other paw..."

Hago slashed Simba in the chest, sending him onto his back. He then picked up a sharp stick, and stabbed Simba in one of his back legs.

Simba roared in pain, tumbling down the hill, collapsing in a heap on the ground below, a few feet away from the insane Nala.

He felt broken. All he could feel right now was pain. Brutal, uncaring pain that wouldn't go away.

Hago hopped down the hill, staring down at the fallen Prince. "You've lost, Simba. Nala is mine. The last sound you'll hear will be our laughter."

He held out his paw, and his magical staff flew into it. He turned to look at Nala, and tossed the staff at her. She caught it. "There you go, my angel. Make Daddy proud." He grabbed Simba by the shoulder, holding him up.

Staring down at the sharp end of the staff, Nala laughed maniacally. She sat up, ready to hurl the staff at Simba's chest, impaling him.

"Nala..." Simba said weakly, but it was no use. She wouldn't listen.

Nala continued to laugh, aiming the knife-like end of the staff at Simba. This would kill him instantly.

Hago grinned widely, so eager for this to all end. "*Do it!*" he ordered his daughter.

Nala laughed and laughed, ready to kill Simba. She winced, tears streaming down her cheeks, and hurled the staff.

Hago cried out in pain, and was sent flying onto a large rock on his back. He looked down at the staff embedded in his chest, and frowned. "That's not funny..." he said. "That's not..."

He gagged, slid from the rock and collapsed to his stomach, letting out a loud gasp.

He was dead.

Simba stared up at Nala, his eyes wide with shock.

She continued to laugh, as if enjoying it. She laughed louder and harder, and before Simba even knew it...

She started to cry.

Nala collapsed to the ground, crying and sobbing her eyes out.

Simba ambled to his paws, and stumbled towards Nala, finding it hard to walk after being stabbed in the leg. He embraced Nala in a warm hug. "It's okay, Nala. It's okay..."

Haiba arrived on the scene, staring wide-eyed at the commotion. "What the heck happened out... here?"

He saw Nala crying her eyes out, burying her fur in Simba's chest. It didn't take him too long to understand what had happened.

"... We buried Hago and the staff deep underneath the ground," Simba explained to his father that night, having returned to the Pride Lands. "You're the only other person who knows what happened."

"Has she started talking again?" Mufasa asked, looking in the direction of the den. Nala was in there. She could still be heard crying.

Simba nodded. "Yeah. I don't know how it's gonna affect her, though," he told him. "Hago drove her insane."

"I think we'd better keep this between you and me, Simba," Mufasa suggested. "I think it's for the best."

"Don't worry about it," replied Simba, shooting a sad glance towards the den opening. "No one should have to know what happened today." He stared up into his father's eyes. "*No one*."

The End

AN: Ouch. That was rather... psychologically disturbing. It was actually inspired by something made quite a while ago. I wonder if you could possibly guess what it was...

But hey, what about Nala? Is she okay? Will she ever regain her sanity? Only time will tell, my friends. Only time will tell.

NEXT TIME: A bunch of cute, cuddly little creatures end up in the Pride Lands, and everyone immediately takes a liking to them. Unfortunately for them, Haiba knows what they really are...